



**CITY OF AKRON, OHIO**  
**POLICE DIVISION**  
**MICHAEL T. MATULAVICH, CHIEF OF POLICE**

NUMBER P-2008-049	EFFECTIVE DATE March 3, 2008	RESCINDS P-2005-049 Issued 7-11-05
SUBJECT Critical Incident Response Procedure		ISSUING AUTHORITY Chief Michael T. Matulavich

## **I. POLICY**

While most emergency situations are handled locally, a major incident may require assistance from other jurisdictions, the state, or the federal government. Therefore, the Akron Police Department is committed to a unified approach to incident management, standard command and management structures with an emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid, and resource management.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Critical Incident – Is a natural or manmade disaster with potential of mass casualties and significant property damage and may require a response from multiple agencies. Examples include hazardous materials incidents, bomb threats or explosions, major fires, building collapses, and acts of terrorism.
- B. Incident Commander – The on scene member of the Akron Fire Department who is in total command of all personnel and equipment.
- C. Police Haz-Mat Officer – Officers designated by the Chief of Police specially trained in dealing with disasters and hazardous materials incidents.
- D. Police Coordinator – The first police officer to arrive on scene shall assume the role of Police Coordinator until relieved by a supervisor. The ranking officer on duty shall designate a supervisor to respond to the scene and assume this position. By virtue of his rank, the highest ranking officer on duty may assume the role of Police Coordinator. The Police Coordinator reports to and operates from the command post.
- E. Hot Zone (inner perimeter) – The area surrounding the actual incident into which only essential emergency personnel may enter, as determined by the Incident Commander.
- F. Warm Zone (middle perimeter) – The area surrounding the hot zone where potentially needed emergency personnel and equipment may stage, at the direction of the Incident Commander.
- G. Cold Zone (outer perimeter) – The area where the command post is situated and other support services are staged. All civilians and media personnel are to be kept beyond this area. Uniform officers assigned to this perimeter are responsible for crowd and traffic control functions.

- H. Hazardous Material – Any substance, or combination of substances that when escaping from, or outside of its container, may harm persons or the environment.
- I. Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) – An IED can be almost anything with any type of material and initiator. It is a homemade device that is designed to cause death or injury by using explosives alone or in combination with toxic chemicals, biological toxins or radiological material. IEDs can be produced in varying sizes, functioning methods, containers, and delivery methods.
- J. National Incident Management System (NIMS) – Provides a consistent nationwide template for organizations to work together effectively and efficiently to prepare for, prevent, response to, and recover from domestic critical incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.
- K. Secondary Device – An IED designed to activate at a determined time after an initial incident or explosion; targeting first responders or command post personnel. Officers should be mindful of secondary devices when responding to the scene or when establishing a command post.
- L. Placard – Diamond shaped sign which should be on all four sides of a transporting vehicle; i.e., trailer, railroad car, pick up, etc., or container. This sign will contain a symbol or number, which will identify the type of hazardous material inside. The absence of placards does not preclude the presence of a hazardous material as only certain quantities must be labeled, and there are numerous illegal shipments which are not placarded.
- M. Shipping Papers – Bills of lading, manifests, waybills, etc., required by law to accompany any material in transport including hazardous material. Located in the cab of a locomotive or the driver's position of motor vehicles.
- N. Emergency Response Guidebook – Hazardous material handbook published by the US Department of Transportation. Contains information pertinent to the identification and emergency action responses relative to identifiable hazardous material.

### III. PROCEDURE

#### A. CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE GUIDELINES

1. The first officer arriving on the scene of a critical incident shall assess the nature and scope of the emergency and notify Safety Communications. He will request whatever additional units or agencies are needed and take charge of any police action until a supervisor arrives on scene.
2. The primary responsibility of the first responder is to provide for the safety of the citizens and any responding emergency personnel. Part of this includes a knowledgeable assessment of the extent of the emergency and relaying that information to other responders.
3. Once a command post is established, the Police Coordinator will report to the Incident Commander and remain at the command post until relieved.

## B. HAZARDOUS SPILL GUIDELINES

### 1. General safety rules:

- a. If necessary to approach the site, do so from an upwind, uphill direction if possible.
- b. Do not walk into, touch, taste, or smell any spilled material.
- c. Avoid inhaling fumes, smoke and vapors even if no hazardous materials are suspected.
- d. Do not assume that gases or vapors are not present because of the lack of odor or visual cloud.
- e. Use of flares or smoking is prohibited in any hazardous materials incident.
- f. Attempt rescues only if possible, without endangering additional lives, including your own.
- g. Decontamination instructions must be followed, since some hazardous material can be transmitted to other persons.
- h. Hazardous materials shall not be brought into the station.

### 2. Initial responding officer's responsibilities:

- a. If there is hazardous material involved or suspected, officers shall withdraw to the furthest possible distance without losing control of the scene.
- b. Notify Safety Communications and provide as much pertinent information as possible. Indicate the safest route to approach the scene.
- c. Secure the area and divert traffic and pedestrians as far away as is practical.

### 3. Safety Communications responsibilities:

- a. If known, the hazards of the material involved and any pertinent information available will be conveyed to all responding units.
- b. Notify the Police Haz-Mat Officer.
- c. Dispatch a supervisor.
- d. If the Incident Commander determines the need for an evacuation, Safety Communications will:
  - 1) Contact Metro RTA to arrange for buses to be readied for use.
  - 2) Notify qualified police personnel to drive the evacuation buses.

#### 4. Police Coordinator responsibilities:

- a. The first arriving supervisor shall assume the role of a Police Coordinator and report to the fire command post until relieved.
- b. Direct the activities of all police personnel, as directed by the Incident Commander.
- c. Maintain a roster of all police personnel assigned to the incident, their location, and assignment.
- d. Initiate the mobilization of the evacuation team if the Incident Commander determines the need.
  - 1) Request sufficient manpower to conduct the evacuation.
  - 2) Assign a supervisor to coordinate the evacuation.
- e. Arrange for barricades to be delivered so that police personnel on the perimeter can, when practical, be relieved. Any relieved officer shall report to the Police Coordinator for reassignment.
- f. Perform duties of Police Haz-Mat Officer until relieved.

#### 5. Police Haz-Mat Officer

- a. Assume the role of the Police Coordinator.
- b. Be responsible for complying with AFD decontamination instructions for police personnel.
- c. Complete a confidential report and ensure all other related reports are completed.

#### 6. Officer's responsibilities:

- a. Report by radio or in person, your name and car number to the Police Coordinator.
- b. Immediately notify the Police Coordinator of any exposure or suspected exposure to the hot zone.
- c. Report to the Police Coordinator before leaving the scene in order to receive decontamination instructions and medical attention.

### C. BOMB THREAT GUIDELINES

#### 1. Command and control and investigations.

- a. The police department has command and control and investigative responsibility for all calls involving bomb threats.

- b. The fire department has command and control and investigative responsibility for all calls where a bomb or explosive is located or if an explosion has already occurred.
2. Safety Communications responsibilities:
- a. A supervisor and two units will be dispatched to the scene of a bomb threat.
  - b. Notify the ranking Uniform Subdivision supervisor on duty in the event that the bomb threat involves the Harold K. Stubbs Justice Center.
  - c. Complete a Bomb Threat Report on all bomb threats.
3. Officer's responsibilities:
- a. Turn off all electronic equipment, including personal equipment, before reaching a minimum of 1,000 feet, approximately two city blocks, from the bomb threat scene.
  - b. The first officer on scene will consult with the person in charge of the property and gather as much information as possible.
  - c. The senior officer on scene will initiate the duties outlined in supervisor's responsibilities until relieved.
  - d. Initially dispatched unit will complete necessary reports.
4. Supervisor's responsibilities:
- a. Organize and coordinate a search of the premises and maintain a log of those areas searched.
    - 1) If the call is a bomb threat, the decision to evacuate the building is the responsibility of the person in charge of the property. The police department has no authority to evacuate the premises.
    - 2) Consider posting officers at the entrance and exits of the building to keep persons from entering the building until a thorough search is conducted. These officers should also stop and investigate any suspicious person leaving the building.
  - b. Assume the role of the Police Coordinator if a bomb or explosive device is located. The decision to evacuate will be made by the fire supervisor.
  - c. The supervisor in charge will assign officers to a mobile patrol ensuring that the perimeter is sealed with an adequate number of officers. Ensure that all electronic equipment is turned off.
    - 1) Assist AFD with the evacuation.
    - 2) Establish communications with Safety Communications.

#### 5. Search of the scene

- a. When possible, use volunteer civilian employees or occupants in the search. They are familiar with items that are out of place or do not belong in the area.
- b. When possible, pair up officers with these civilian volunteers.
- c. Conduct a systematic, planned search, starting with the exterior of the premises. Take all necessary equipment with you that will be needed to conduct the search.
- d. All officers involved in the search will report back to the supervisor in person.
- e. If a device is found:
  - 1) Do not touch or move any device. Immediately evacuate all persons at least 1,000 feet away from the suspicious object.
  - 2) The police supervisor will advise the fire supervisor of the fact that a suspicious object has been found and its location.

#### D. BIOLOGICAL THREAT GUIDELINES

##### 1. Safety Communications responsibilities:

- a. Screen calls to determine if police response is necessary. Officers will be sent only if a call requires an investigation on our part.
- b. If it is determined that police response is necessary, a district car will be sent along with a member of the fire department.

##### 2. Initial responding officer's responsibilities:

- a. Remain calm, confident and reassuring when dealing with those involved at a scene of a suspected biological incident.
- b. Immediately investigate the circumstances surrounding the biological concern. Questions to ask should include:
  - 1) When was the suspicious item received?
  - 2) How was the item received?
  - 3) Were there any prior threats?
  - 4) Are there any threats associated with this item?
  - 5) Is the sender known?

- 6) Is this item out of the ordinary?
- 7) Is there possibly a legitimate reason for this suspicious item?
- 8) Is there any reason why this person or business would be the target of terrorism?
- c. Use information gathered to determine, along with on scene fire personnel, if this is a credible threat. If so, notify a supervisor who will ensure the FBI is notified.
- d. Complete an Incident Report for any credible threats.
- e. If the incident is not a credible threat, instruct the possessor of any property to double bag the item and dispose of it in their trash container, or officers may dispose of the item for the caller. If the item was sent through the post office and is not opened or leaking, the Postal Inspector will collect the item.

By Order Of,

  
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Michael T. Matulavich  
Chief of Police

Date February 14, 2008